

INVITATION TO MONARCHY

BY RALPH ADAMS CRAM

DURING the last ten years there has been a most astonishing avalanche of books scrutinizing social, industrial, and political democracy, all of them explicitly or by inference challenging its assumptions and drastically condemning its works. To name only a few of the authors who come from many lands, we have: Spengler, Ortega y Gasset, Berdyaev, Orton, Niebuhr, Agar, Nock. All these men of open eyes and active minds are devotees of liberty; they recognize the unescapable fact that under democracy we have lost this liberty, or are losing it with ever-increasing momentum, together with many other highly desirable commodities in the social sphere. Their power of analysis is admirable, their capacity for characterization and denunciation (Messrs. Agar and Nock, for example) highly edifying, but curiously enough they one and all seem able to envisage only two possible destinies for disintegrating democracy, either of which may perfectly well happen, both of which are equally repulsive: communism or fascism.

So it is not from these high-minded and sometimes highly excitable students (with the single but brilliant exception of Professor Berdyaev) that the suggestion of a revived monarchism issues, but rather from such unexpected sources as quite commonplace citizens, voters, formal adherents of some political party or other; from practical men of business, teachers of economics or sociology, common work-

men, and the man on the street. It is from the people at this end of the scale that there has come the query: Is not some form of monarchy the best and most effective form of political and social organization, and to kingship shall we not ultimately—and almost immediately—return? This is significant, and the subject is (I think) worth pursuing a little further.

In the light of this new leading, my memory of old days is clarified, and I call to mind a period, now some forty years gone, when those men with whom I was then associated were convinced monarchists, not to say Legitimists and Jacobites. This was at the very meridian of the age of Triumphant Democracy, and to none of us, I fancy, was it more than a pious aspiration; certainly we did not quite expect to be taken seriously, nor, it is hardly necessary to say, were we so taken. Certainly, also, we dared not envisage a time, hardly more than a generation in the future, when serious-minded men of twice our years (as they were then) would pose the question and give it an affirmative answer.

Perhaps if, back in the very last days of the closing century, we had for one mad moment foreseen the progressive degeneration of the parliamentary system of government and the dark discredit to be cast on social and political democracy by its own revealing actions, as these were to be accomplished in the coming and im-

mediate years, our hopes would have been better. Nothing of the sort was vouchsafed us. We were, I suppose, less the prophets of what was to come than the last ripples of the dying wave of Romanticism. Our monarchical bent was romantic, sentimental, decorative, rather than the issue of a critical and philosophical estimate of existing conditions and a drawing of conclusions therefrom. As a matter of fact, we should have been rather superhuman in point of intelligence (which we most certainly were not) had we deduced from the evidence any conclusions that would have indicated what was really about to take place. At that time everything, particularly democracy, was going strong. Civilization was on the upgrade under the determining impulse of progressive evolution, and the only threat to the equally progressive democratization of the world was a possible, though hardly probable, declension of the crescent socialism on anarchy.

There were kings pretty much everywhere, except in France and the United States and South America, but they were without exception *rois fainéants*, negligible quantities, except where their personal character gave them an unofficial status; and one saw signs indicating their ultimate liquidation by a process of peaceful penetration by parliaments ever growing stronger (in craft if not in character) and establishing themselves, apparently, in perpetuity. This was not the sort of kingship we had in mind, so, perforce, we went back to certain model kings (or those we held to be such) of older and happier times. Such, for example, as St. Louis, René of Anjou, Frederick II as King of Sicily, Charles I of England. There was glamor about them all. We liked this saving grace of personality and found little enough of it, either in our physical or

spiritual environment (I am writing of the late 'Eighties) and none at all in the "Thrones, Dominations, Kingdoms, Powers" (political) of that particular period of civilization.

Then some of us began to penetrate beneath the glamor, though formal histories and biographies gave little aid, for the accepted chroniclers for a century or more had been stanchly—not to say unscrupulously—anti-monarchical, while they based their conclusions on an unwholesome blend of congenital myopia and an uncritical reliance on original documents, the latter, notoriously, the least reliable of all historical sources of accurate information. Nevertheless, we got what we wanted (the word is deliberately chosen) in spite of Macaulay, Carlyle, Froude, and their propagandist ilk, and discovered that, for example, Charles I was a patriot, statesman, and martyr, and that Van Dyck and the *Icon Basiliæ* actually showed him as he was: an idealist and great gentleman, fighting for justice and the poorer and more Christian of his people, against as sorry a cabal of sportsmen, profiteers, receivers of stolen goods, and sour sectaries as ever assailed a high-minded king. This was pretty good, and we kept on until we built up our galaxy of patriot kings and then, I am free to admit, attributed their virtues to many others of their calling, of whom less could be said in praise. We stopped, however, before we reached the reigning sovereigns of the day (with the exception of Leo XIII, who ranked as high as any) because we found them unhandsome and generally impotent, and this sort of thing did not fit into our picture.

Then democracy achieved its perfect work: one throne after another was vacated, the very idea of kingship fell into the limbo of archaeology, and at last came

the Armageddon of the year of grace, 1918-19, and after that those of us who retained our faith could only sit in the shadow and "tell sad stories of the death of kings". And now, as I said in the beginning, the kings may not have come back (two, at least, are hurriedly on the way) but the idea has, and from Ortega y Gasset and Nicholas Berdyaev to the newspaper correspondents, this same idea is being brought forward, and apparently without protest.

Perhaps, after all, this phenomenon is not so surprising. Democratic governmental methods and practices began to corrupt first of all here in the United States just after the Civil War: then Continental governments followed the same course, with added refinements, and finally the parliamentary system, since the World War, has dissolved in such a witches' sabbath of incompetence, ineptitude, and venality that it has been thrown into the discard and, apart from England, France, and the admirable Scandinavian kingdoms, all Europe has accepted dictatorships as the lesser of two evils. No wonder, then, that the alternative, good sound monarchy, suggests itself to those who have no taste for parliaments, dictatorships, or soviets.

For this astonishing phenomenon is now prevalent. At the very moment when there are fewer reigning monarchs than at any time since the close of the Dark Ages, here, there, and everywhere are heard not only whispers of republican disloyalty and tentative suggestions that after all there may have been something in the monarchical idea, but clearly-vocalized statements to the effect that we, even we ourselves, at the close of the Century of Progress and before the sepulcher of triumphant democracy, could do very well with a king "happy and glorious long to

reign over us". And these subversive sentiments are voiced not alone by the high-brow and the political theorist, but very frequently by the man in the street, who at last seems to be doing a little thinking for himself.

II

During the great debacle that befell when peace, with all its horrors, broke out over Europe when the guns ceased fire in 1918, the fall or flight of a king from his throne was hailed by the newspapers and other organs of public opinion (how exact is the phrase!) as an act of God—or more correctly of Demos, who then held a position of greater honor and respect. Now the case is quite different and the surviving sovereigns are treated with respect and even affection. True, they are rather a picked lot, but even the kings in exile, with one or two exceptions, are subject to no disfavor. When the King of England celebrates his Jubilee, the whole world (the Irish Republic excepted) pays him honor, not to say adoration, and all the magnificent and medieval panoply of high kingship is avidly, even enviously regarded by the citizenry of this Republic. Somehow behind the glittering show, men seem to sense reality; there are stirrings of an older memory, for a few generations—they really are hardly more than decades—cannot wholly nullify the inheritance of five millenniums. After all, republicanism is a very bourgeois, *nouveau riche* affair. After its first rather hysterical manifestations, it was increasingly afflicted with an inferiority complex, and now that it has before its eyes what it has led to, whether in the shape of contemporary parliaments or the salving but uncomfortable dictatorships, its complex is merging rapidly into what Evangelicals

used to call "conviction of sin". So far as the office-holders and legislators are concerned, this is, where and if it exists, an interior emotion; the prime necessity of retaining their jobs quite estops them from any form of outward expression.

Now I frankly associate myself with those who believe that monarchy is a better system of civil government than democracy. I began to think this long ago when parliamentary governments, based on universal suffrage, seemed still to be working fairly well; I mean during the 'Nineties of the last century. Study of the theory and scheme of government became rather a cherished avocation, as soon as I got beyond the glamor of romantic monarchy. Through the framing of the American Constitution, I worked back by way of English government and the French Revolution to the Renaissance monarchies (which set me back a bit, they were so obviously out of key with the fundamental principles of justice and liberty) and so to the free kingship of the Middle Ages. Once there it did not seem necessary to go farther, for a sane model then came into view. The study of political theory in the Middle Ages, and of its practical working-out, is illuminating and, as well, a commentary on the lack of intelligence, or the deliberate propagandism of the writers on this subject in the nineteenth century.

Back in those delectable 'Nineties, we knew very little about medieval political theory, or any other, for that matter; we were working on theory and emotion, which, after all, is not a bad basis to start on—if it is abandoned in good season. We indulged in no vain hopes and I fancy that the two things that seemed to us most nearly impossible were that within fifty years, democracy and parliamentary governments would break up in im-

potence and futility over the greater part of the world, giving place to dictatorships, and that at the expiration of that period, there would be a real revival of monarchical sentiment frankly expressed and without any outburst of popular indignation. Well, exactly that has happened, and so I indite this inquiring into how it all came about, and why after all monarchy is the best working system.

The answer to the first question is easy enough: it is simply that the representative, parliamentary system, based on universal suffrage, with a chief executive elected for a brief term by party votes and by party methods, has come a most terrible cropper, the results being so deplorable and so obvious that in sheer self-defense, the erstwhile democratic states have been forced to accept the monarchical idea not in its absolutist form, but in the rather unpleasant guise of dictatorships. True, the dictator possesses some of the essential qualities and powers of a king, but he has also, by his very nature, some of the worst as well. His achievement of power is based on force—or the threat of force; his tenure of office is insecure; he has no contractual relation with his people, and his will is law. In a word, he is not a patriot king, but a Renaissance despot.

I am not quarreling with current dictatorships—at least not with all of them—for they were and are emergency measures, conceived in desperation. They saved the day wherever they were established, but it would be a most unpleasant thought to have to look on them as permanent institutions. Thinking things through is not an habitual practice of mankind at large, and so I doubt if very many realize that dictatorships are the first steps towards monarchy, taken in a sort of panic induced by a sudden reali-

zation of what has happened to democracy—and what is going to happen next. Having got a dictatorship, man is as little pleased as he was after he got democracy—and had his experience of it for a considerable period. He can't go back to democracy; the memory is too close and too poignant. He must take the next step and this, of course, leads, as it always has done in the past, to monarchy. Some few realize this, but most men confront a dilemma. The very word frightens them, because they do not look back far enough. They see, conjured up by the word, English Georges, French Bourbons, German Hohenzollerns, Italian tyrants of the Renaissance—all the unhandsome despots who came to power after Medievalism had perished. The picture is neither alluring nor convincing, and it is also very misleading.

Now authentic kingship is a very different matter and there is nothing in it at all alarming, while it may easily be used to make democracy possible (which democracy itself does not), to insure liberty and to assure a measure of order, justice, and the good life. Medieval political theory was based on three firm foundation stones. One: that the object of government was to insure justice. Two: that society, from the household up, must find its focus in one man—father, count, duke, king, emperor—and in this solitary individual, society, in its several unitary forms, incarnates itself and achieves its dynamic symbol. Three: that all authority came from God; that therefore a king ruled by divine right, but this divine right gave no authority to rule evilly or unjustly. Who were to judge and determine this question? The subjects who were ruled. The decision lay with them and they knew how to enforce it. The which is very good democracy.

III

Now to make practical application of this to our present estate. During the last two decades, we have had a sufficiently clear demonstration that the democratic-republican system of government no longer works. This is not necessarily to say that it never did, but that is another story. The reasons for its present failure would seem to be these: The system is based on the false theory that "all men are and of right ought to be free and equal"; that man, by an inscrutable law of the unknowable, is proceeding through the method of progressive evolution to ever higher and higher things; that the electoral franchise is not a privilege but an inalienable right of man; that the majority is generally right, but the majority, right or wrong, must rule. These premises are all disproved by history and experience, but they are bred in the bone of the general public and they are the means whereby politicians live, therefore they are as the laws of the Medes and Persians. They are, some of them, but not all, as is generally supposed, embedded in the original Constitution of 1787; those that are not there have been inserted by means of the Amendments promulgated since the compilation of the Bill of Rights, and this amended (and shockingly distorted) Constitution has become a fetish and sacrosanct. The Constitution was framed for some three million agrarian citizens of thirteen sovereign states. It was intended to adapt itself to changing conditions and ample provision was made for this. Unfortunately—as I have tried to show in an earlier article*—every amendment subsequent to the Thirteenth was adopted as a sort of emergency measure,

* *Back to What Constitution?* The American Mercury, December, 1935.

and the trail of popular passion, uninformed public opinion, and political expediency is over them all.

The strongest point in the original Constitution was the power given into the hands of the President. It is now the weakest. In 1787, party government, in the sense in which we have experienced it since the election of Andrew Jackson, was unthought of. Indeed, the original Constitution provided that the candidate receiving the largest number of votes should be President; the candidate having the next largest number, Vice-President. The President was to represent the people as a whole, without regard to party, and the Framers thought they had provided for this by the device of the Electoral College. Of course, the people themselves were not to vote directly for President, in spite of the fact that the electorate was then a restricted and select body. The intent, and the expectation, was that the several states would choose their wisest men as members of the Electoral College and that these disinterested citizens would, in turn, select the one man who could best serve the Republic. It was assumed that he would be re-elected for an indefinite number of terms, provided he ruled acceptably.

In 1787 this was a conservative and altogether admirable scheme; but by constitutional amendment, the force of precedent, and a transformed public opinion consequent on a completely revolutionized racial stock, universal suffrage, and the new financial and industrial system, it has now been so altered that it bears no resemblance to the original. What the majority of the Founders wanted was a sovereign similar to the English King but without the title. What we have got is a party boss raised to high eminence and given certain powers greater than those

held by the nominal kings of the nineteenth century. After the first great quarrel from Washington to John Quincy Adams, it is hard to count more than five who rose above this level. Andrew Jackson did (personally I hold him to have been the evil genius of the Republic), and so also did Lincoln, Cleveland, Wilson and the first Roosevelt. Few fell to the low level of Grant and Harding, but mostly they were party leaders and therefore subservient to party. This is not enough now when parliaments have come to be what they are and the common life what it is, as well as the electorate and the public opinion it engenders under the influence of mob psychology.

Here, then, is the first proposition: In a well-ordered and free society, where liberty is a prime requisite and justice the object of government, the Chief of State must not be the head of a political party. He must not owe his office to partisan action, nor must he be dependent on party favor for continuance in office. He, himself, must represent the whole people and the State as a unitary and living organism. This means that he must hold office for life—or as the phrase goes, for good behavior. He must be chosen by methods as nearly unpartisan as possible, perhaps by some device similar to the original Electoral College, its capture by political parties rigidly guarded against, but never, certainly, by popular vote. Two new prerogatives must be given him: initiative in legislation and authority to dissolve either or both of the legislative bodies in the event that a government bill which, in his opinion, supported by his cabinet or ministry, is vital to the welfare of the nation, fails of passage, or a legislative bill (there must be room for such once the more important government agenda is disposed of) is passed over his veto.

These new prerogatives are all that is necessary to transform the President into a sovereign who would be a true Chief of State. The suggested initiative in legislation means only that with the advice and consent of his cabinet, he presents before each session of the legislative bodies an agenda of such bills as are considered necessary to the welfare of the country, which bills cannot be referred to committee but must be debated in the open and either passed, amended and passed, or refused, after which private bills may be introduced and dealt with as at present. Power to dissolve the legislative chambers and order a new election throws the moot question back on the people where, in the end, in all sound forms of government, the ultimate sanction must rest. If they fail to support the Government, then that is the end of the matter.

Of course this strengthening of the sovereign power would not alone guarantee good government, though it would go far to this end. Many other reforms are necessary, such as the total abolition of the lobby, the elimination of some of the foolish and intolerable rules of the legislative chambers (such as those that permit riders and filibusters), and particularly the restoration of the electoral franchise to its original status as a privilege and a duty, not a natural right. These, however, have no place in this essay, which is intended to deal only with the question of kingship and its superiority to an elected and partisan presidency. I propose to take up these matters at another time.

The releasing of the Chief of State from all party affiliations would go far towards giving him status as the personification of the State in the consciousness of the people, and this is as important a considera-

tion as his prerogatives. The most vital factor in kingship is just this incarnation in one visible individual, of the tradition of a people, their patriotism, their ideals, and their aspirations. This is why a king of today, like him of England, though shorn of nearly all his just prerogatives, is still in the eyes of his people the august and honored personification of the State; a cohesive and inspiring force in secular society. This centralizing of a national idea in one personality is a basic factor in any well-ordered polity. There is no valid substitute. You cannot make a flag, a slogan, or an anthem take its place. Efforts towards this end are always failures and with results that are frequently ridiculous.

Under normal circumstances a President chosen as such-like are chosen today, cannot play this part. The candidate who is seen maneuvering for nomination, working to secure pledges and delegates, giving promises and negotiating deals with other politicians, rushing over the country in "whirlwind campaigns", broadcasting eloquent addresses to every known type of citizen, hedging diplomatically here, "viewing with alarm" there: the "little friend of all the world" (of his own party) until the votes are counted—such an one may give an entertaining show, arouse the facile admiration of the go-getter for his similar qualities, but he can never personify the State. Elected, he can never slough off the ignominious connotations of the political campaign. He is always the head of his party, not the head of his people in their inner consciousness. Never, unless, on occasion, he achieves martyrdom, and then only posthumously—and then not always. Lincoln gained this sad honor, but only he; not even Wilson in the tragedy of his end. Once a politician, always a politician. But

what the people, the community, the state need and should have, is *their* man, not the parties' choice. This may be why, all unconsciously, they reject every President — sooner or later — as their head and their leader, accepting him only as just another politician who, for his party or for his adherents, can get results in the field of material benefits.

It is not enough, then, that the Chief of State should be given added powers and prerogatives of sovereignty and be released from all partisan ties. He must assume that title and state which are consonant with his dignity, and function as the State incarnate. A President is by title the fellow of the president of a chamber of commerce, a railway system, or a social club. Words are symbols and they are dynamic in their power of suggestion; therefore they are to be reckoned with. A president presides; a true chief of state leads, directs, and inspires. By association, which has been part of human consciousness for at least four thousand years, the word King, or its linguistic equivalents, has meant just this, and so long as the mind of man is what it is, you cannot make the word President, or its equivalent, take its place. This, of course, is why when a democracy goes to pieces, as in time it always does, the strong man who comes into power to redeem the consequent social loss and build a new state, always takes the title, not of President but of Emperor, *Duce*, *Führer*, or, most logically, King.

And with the fact, the title, and the estate, must go the forms, ceremonies, ritual, and vesture that show in visible form the quality of this kingship that is so much more than a faculty of govern-

ment. All these things are symbols, as the flag or the other inanimate details are symbols, with the difference that they are more universal and at the same time personal in their significance and appeal. They are not employed for ostentation or for the magnifying of the individual, any more than are the sacerdotal vestments of the priest at the altar, the robes of the judges on the bench, the gowns of scholastics, or the secular dress clothes for formal occasions. To resent them is snobbish and vulgar. We have our own ceremonial today: hat on the heart or handkerchief fluttered in the air when the flag goes by; military salutes of rifle, sword, cannon, and bunting; the weird habiliments of secret societies, grips, and passwords. But the old and splendid ceremonial of a royal progress, as at the recent funeral of the British King, is more noble, significant, beautiful, and spiritually stimulating.

And so, after this interlude of well-meant but futile democracy of the modern sort, we should do well to return to the old kingship. Not that of the Renaissance autocracies, which was the debasement of sovereignty, but to the elder sort under which a real democracy was not only possible but well assured. There may be liberty under a right monarchy: there has come a sort of slavery under the democracies of the modern form where a political oligarchy and a money oligarchy, now in alliance, now in conflict, have brought about grave disorder, social chaos, and the negation of the free and the good life, under the forms of a free commonwealth founded on assumptions that are baseless biologically, philosophically, historically, and from the standpoint of plain commonsense.



THE CLINIC

Rats

BY HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

IRONICAL as it may seem, the animal whose name is a synonym for everything contemptible in the human vocabulary is, in many essential respects, the most similar of all animals to man. At the basis of this similarity is the fact that men and rats are the only completely omnivorous animals on earth. They and they alone will eat anything and everything: meat, cereal, fruits, nuts, eggs, fish, and if nothing else is available—each other. Moreover, mammals having the same food habits are known to develop close similarities in their nervous and nutritional processes. Thus, the same diseases attack them; both rats and men, for example, are highly susceptible to a virulent type of cancer. They both can live in any climate from torrid to polar, and under conditions that would spell death to other creatures. And this strange parallel goes beyond mere physical adaptability; Hans Zinsser, author of *Rats, Lice and History*, declares that rats and men have precisely the same attitude toward all the rest of creation. They are completely useless to other forms of animal life which they impartially destroy by their audacity, ferocity, and resourcefulness.

It was because of the identical eating habits of rats and men that a group of biologists decided, about twenty-five years ago, to utilize the rat as the ideal experimental animal. So now, at the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, University of Pennsylvania, specially-constructed

steel and concrete buildings are devoted to the breeding and study of a perfect race of *Mus Norvegicus albinus*, free from flaws and disease. In experiments involving human conclusions, the Wistar standardized white rat has proved itself superior to guinea pigs, dogs, monkeys, or rabbits. Under the direction of Dr. H. H. Donaldson, the world's foremost authority on white rats, ninety-six generations have been bred under approximately ideal conditions. Their food is scientifically balanced and prepared; their air is filtered and sterilized. No visitors are allowed; they might contaminate the rats, and thus invalidate years of laboratory research. The Wistar Institute supplies virtually all white rats used by scientists today, at \$45 per hundred, f.o.b. Philadelphia.

Business is brisk. For without the services of *Mus Norvegicus*, the scientific laboratories might just as well close up shop. On this pink-eyed, white-furred rodent—an offshoot of the pugnacious brown Norway rat—scientists have performed more experiments than upon all other animals combined. They make him run in a revolving cage until he is exhausted, then observe the effects of fatigue upon his sex life. They expose him to leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis, and pneumonia, and watch him "take it". In the nutritional field *Mus* is the preferred subject of metabolic research: groups are fed all the vitamins, a few vitamins, no vitamins at all; at the end of each experiment their tiny bones